



Christmas Decorations

PREPARATIONS for Christmas loom large in the future of every family at this time of year, and especially in families with young children. Following articles on paper cutting and tearing and picture making in the two previous "Journals," in this one of the series on child care and development Dorothy Johnson, Rural Sociologist, Department of Agriculture, Christchurch, shows how the preparation of Christmas decorations can be made a co-operative family enterprise.

SEVERAL times in these articles it has been suggested that the objects that children make, even in paper, can and should be used in various aspects of the life of the home, both in the day-by-day ones and on those more special occasions which mark the social festivals of the year, such as birthdays. Probably the most important to the child and in his development is his own birthday. Being in the centre of the picture for a day, surrounded by presents that are tokens of the love and affection in which he is held, not only deepens his feeling of security, but also satisfies his need of significance in the family group. If the occasion is marked by a party, he can contribute to the festive preparations by decorating the places of the guests with paper mats, folding table napkins for them, and making doilies for the cake plates.

Most Important Birthday

Directing his energy in too concentrated a fashion for any specific occasion is a mistake. A small child can do only very little at once, as his powers of concentration are slight, but the things he makes can be put away when his attention is focused on something else, or when he is asleep, and produced later for the birthday celebrations as his work and his contribution to the preparation. That is true chiefly for the tiny tots. The older ones can do more at one time and are capable of planning and working for more remote and special occasions such as Christmas. This is the

most important birthday of the year, celebrating the coming of love itself, thus enhancing the significance of the birthdays of individual members of every family. That this is so is symbolised by the more general decoration of the house for the Christmas season, generally stimulated, it must be admitted, by the abundance of mass-produced and stereotyped decorations which fill the shops at this time.

Would it not be better for a family to produce its own Christmas decorations, sometimes indirectly, sometimes purposefully? Last month's article in this series dealt with the gradual making of a picture of a Christmas tree, either on a life-size scale as a combined family effort or on the individual level to form a mantelpiece frieze in the decorative scheme. From the various types of paper work other Christmas decorations can be made.

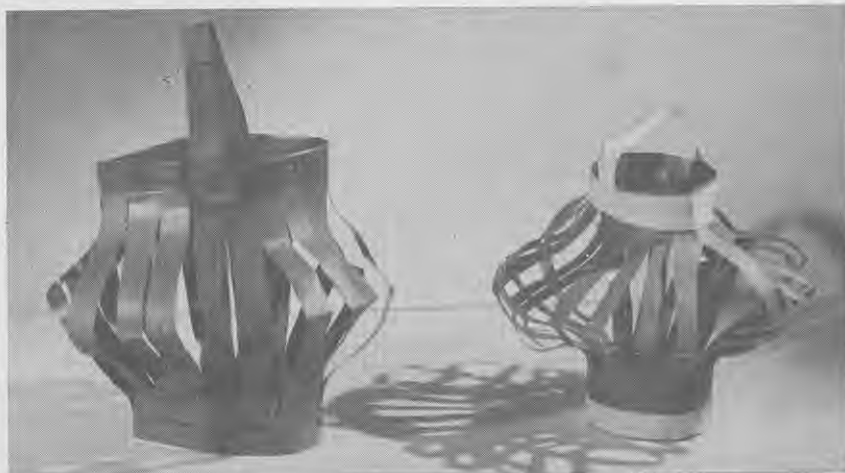
Coloured Paper Chains

The simplest wall decorations are the coloured paper chains in the making of which everyone can lend a hand.

One kind is made by folding a 2in. strip of paper into 16 thicknesses and



cutting it as shown in the illustration. Many strips can be gummed together for festoons for walls and ceiling.



[Green and Hahn Ltd. photo.
Lanterns made from gaily-coloured paper.